

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF NEW YORK

ANDREW WILLIAMS,

Plaintiff,

-against-

P. ESSEX, et al.,

Defendants.

19-CV-11545 (PMH)

ORDER OF SERVICE

PHILIP M. HALPERN, United States District Judge:

Plaintiff was incarcerated at Woodbourne Correctional Facility when the events giving rise to his claims took place but had been released as of the date that he filed this action. By order dated December 20, 2020, the Court granted Plaintiff's request to proceed without prepayment of fees, that is, *in forma pauperis*.¹ Defendants E. Nova and P. Essex have been served. (ECF Nos. 10-11, 15).

On May 21, 2020, Plaintiff filed an amended complaint, which adds six individual defendants (Steve Whitbeck, Dawn Amsler, Edwin Elffied, Mark Osborne, Stephen Webster) and the New York State Board of Examiners for Sex Offenders.

STANDARD OF REVIEW

The Court must dismiss an *in forma pauperis* complaint, or any portion of the complaint, that is frivolous or malicious, fails to state a claim on which relief may be granted, or seeks monetary relief from a defendant who is immune from such relief. 28 U.S.C. § 1915(e)(2)(B); *see Livingston v. Adirondack Beverage Co.*, 141 F.3d 434, 437 (2d Cir. 1998). The Court must

¹ Prisoners are not exempt from paying the full filing fee even when they have been granted permission to proceed *in forma pauperis*. *See* 28 U.S.C. § 1915(b)(1).

also dismiss a complaint when the Court lacks subject matter jurisdiction. *See* Fed. R. Civ. P. 12(h)(3).

While the law mandates dismissal on any of these grounds, the Court is obliged to construe *pro se* pleadings liberally, *Harris v. Mills*, 572 F.3d 66, 72 (2d Cir. 2009), and interpret them to raise the “strongest [claims] that they suggest,” *Triestman v. Fed. Bureau of Prisons*, 470 F.3d 471, 474 (2d Cir. 2006) (internal quotation marks and citations omitted) (emphasis in original). But the “special solicitude” in *pro se* cases, *id.* at 475 (citation omitted), has its limits – to state a claim, *pro se* pleadings still must comply with Rule 8 of the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure, which requires a complaint to make a short and plain statement showing that the pleader is entitled to relief.

The Supreme Court has held that under Rule 8, a complaint must include enough facts to state a claim for relief “that is plausible on its face.” *Bell Atl. Corp. v. Twombly*, 550 U.S. 544, 570 (2007). A claim is facially plausible if the plaintiff pleads enough factual detail to allow the Court to draw the inference that the defendant is liable for the alleged misconduct. In reviewing the complaint, the Court must accept all well-pleaded factual allegations as true. *Ashcroft v. Iqbal*, 556 U.S. 662, 678-79 (2009). But it does not have to accept as true “[t]hreadbare recitals of the elements of a cause of action,” which are essentially just legal conclusions. *Twombly*, 550 U.S. at 555. After separating legal conclusions from well-pleaded factual allegations, the Court must determine whether those facts make it plausible – not merely possible – that the pleader is entitled to relief. *Id.*

DISCUSSION

A. New York State Board of Examiners for Sex Offenders

“[A]s a general rule, state governments may not be sued in federal court unless they have waived their Eleventh Amendment immunity, or unless Congress has abrogated the states’

Eleventh Amendment immunity” *Gollomp v. Spitzer*, 568 F.3d 355, 366 (2d Cir. 2009).

“The immunity recognized by the Eleventh Amendment extends beyond the states themselves to state agents and state instrumentalities that are, effectively, arms of a state.” *Id.* New York has not waived its Eleventh Amendment immunity to suit in federal court, and Congress did not abrogate the states’ immunity in enacting 42 U.S.C. § 1983. *See Trotman v. Palisades Interstate Park Comm’n*, 557 F.2d 35, 40 (2d Cir. 1977).

The New York State Board of Examiners for Sex Offenders is an arm of the state. *See Williams v. New York State Bd. of Examiners of Sex Offenders*, No. 15-CV-6086, 2015 WL 7281648, at *1 (E.D.N.Y. Nov. 17, 2015). Plaintiff’s § 1983 claims against the Board of Examiners for Sex Offenders are therefore barred by the Eleventh Amendment and are dismissed.

B. Service on Defendant F. Foster

On February 4, 2020, a U.S. Marshal’s Process Receipt and Return of Service form was filed, reflecting that service was unexecuted as to Defendant F. Foster, because he is no longer employed at Woodbourne Correctional Facility. (ECF No. 9). The Court therefore directs that Defendant F. Foster be served at Ulster Correctional Facility, where he reportedly now works.

C. New Individual Defendants

Because Plaintiff has been granted permission to proceed IFP, he is entitled to rely on the Court and the U.S. Marshals Service to effect service. *Walker v. Schult*, 717 F.3d 119, 123 n.6 (2d Cir. 2013); *see also* 28 U.S.C. § 1915(d) (“The officers of the court shall issue and serve all process . . . in [IFP] cases.”); Fed. R. Civ. P. 4(c)(3) (the court must order the Marshals Service to serve if the plaintiff is authorized to proceed IFP)).

Although Rule 4(m) of the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure generally requires that the summons and complaint be served within 90 days of the date the complaint is filed, Plaintiff is

proceeding IFP and could not have served the summons and complaint until the Court reviewed the complaint and ordered that a summons be issued. The Court therefore extends the time to serve until 90 days after the date the summons is issued. If the complaint is not served within that time, Plaintiff should request an extension of time for service. *See Meilleur v. Strong*, 682 F.3d 56, 63 (2d Cir. 2012) (holding that it is the plaintiff's responsibility to request an extension of time for service); *see also Murray v. Pataki*, 378 F. App'x 50, 52 (2d Cir. 2010) ("As long as the [plaintiff proceeding IFP] provides the information necessary to identify the defendant, the Marshals' failure to effect service automatically constitutes 'good cause' for an extension of time within the meaning of Rule 4(m).").

To allow Plaintiff to effect service on Defendants Steve Whitbeck, Dawn Amsler, Edwin Elffied, Mark Osborne, Stephen Webster through the U.S. Marshals Service, the Clerk of Court is instructed to fill out a U.S. Marshals Service Process Receipt and Return form ("USM-285 form") for each of these defendants. The Clerk of Court is further instructed to issue a summons and deliver to the Marshals Service all the paperwork necessary for the Marshals Service to effect service upon these defendants.

Plaintiff must notify the Court in writing if his address changes, and the Court may dismiss the action if Plaintiff fails to do so.

CONCLUSION

The Court dismisses Plaintiff's claims against New York State Board of Examiners for Sex Offenders. *See* 28 U.S.C. § 1915(e)(2)(B)(iii)

The Clerk of Court is instructed to mail a copy of this Order to Plaintiff.

The Clerk of Court is further instructed and complete the USM-285 forms with the addresses for F. Foster, Steve Whitbeck, Dawn Amsler, Edwin Elffied, Mark Osborne, Stephen Webster and deliver to the U.S. Marshals Service all documents necessary to effect service.

In light of the current global health crisis, parties proceeding *pro se* are encouraged to submit all filings by email to Temporary_Pro_Se_Filing@nysd.uscourts.gov. *Pro se* parties also are encouraged to consent to receive all court documents electronically. A consent to electronic service form is available on the Court's website and attached to this Order. *Pro se* parties who are unable to use email may submit documents by regular mail or in person at the drop box located at the U.S. Courthouses in Manhattan (500 Pearl Street) and White Plains (300 Quarropas Street). For more information, including instructions on this new email service for *pro se* parties, please visit the Court's website at nysd.uscourts.gov.

The Court certifies under 28 U.S.C. § 1915(a)(3) that any appeal from this order would not be taken in good faith, and therefore *in forma pauperis* status is denied for the purpose of an appeal. *Cf. Coppedge v. United States*, 369 U.S. 438, 444-45 (1962) (holding that an appellant demonstrates good faith when he seeks review of a nonfrivolous issue).

SO ORDERED.

Dated: June 18, 2020
New York, New York



PHILIP M. HALPERN
United States District Judge

DEFENDANTS AND SERVICE ADDRESSES

1. F. Foster
Ulster Correctional Facility
750 Berne Rd.
Napanoch, NY 12458
2. Steve Whitbeck
New York State Division of Criminal Justice Services
4 Tower Place
Albany, NY 12203
3. Dawn Amsler
New York State Division of Criminal Justice Services
4 Tower Place
Albany, NY 12203
4. Edwin Elffied
New York State Division of Criminal Justice Services
4 Tower Place
Albany, NY 12203
5. Mark Osborne
New York State Division of Criminal Justice Services
4 Tower Place
Albany, NY 12203
6. Stephen Webster
New York State Division of Criminal Justice Services
4 Tower Place
Albany, NY 12203



**United States District Court
Southern District of New York
*Pro Se Office***

Pro Se (Nonprisoner) Consent & Registration Form to Receive Documents Electronically

Parties who are not represented by an attorney and are not currently incarcerated may choose to receive documents in their cases electronically (by e-mail) instead of by regular mail. Receiving documents by regular mail is still an option, but if you would rather receive them only electronically, you must do the following:

1. Sign up for a PACER login and password by contacting PACER¹ at www.pacer.uscourts.gov or 1-800-676-6856;
2. Complete and sign this form.

If you consent to receive documents electronically, you will receive a Notice of Electronic Filing by e-mail each time a document is filed in your case. After receiving the notice, you are permitted one “free look” at the document by clicking on the hyperlinked document number in the e-mail. Once you click the hyperlink and access the document, you may not be able to access the document for free again. After 15 days, the hyperlink will no longer provide free access. Any time that the hyperlink is accessed after the first “free look” or the 15 days, you will be asked for a PACER login and may be charged to view the document. For this reason, *you should print or save the document during the “free look” to avoid future charges.*

IMPORTANT NOTICE

Under Rule 5 of the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure, Local Civil Rule 5.2, and the Court’s Electronic Case Filing Rules & Instructions, documents may be served by electronic means. If you register for electronic service:

1. You will no longer receive documents in the mail;
2. If you do not view and download your documents during your “free look” and within 15 days of when the court sends the e-mail notice, you will be charged for looking at the documents;
3. This service does *not* allow you to electronically file your documents;
4. It will be your duty to regularly review the docket sheet of the case.²

¹ Public Access to Court Electronic Records (PACER) (www.pacer.uscourts.gov) is an electronic public access service that allows users to obtain case and docket information from federal appellate, district, and bankruptcy courts, and the PACER Case Locator over the internet.

² The docket sheet is the official record of all filings in a case. You can view the docket sheet, including images of electronically filed documents, using PACER or you can use one of the public access computers available in the Clerk’s Office at the Court.



**United States District Court
Southern District of New York**
Pro Se Office

CONSENT TO ELECTRONIC SERVICE

I hereby consent to receive electronic service of notices and documents in my case(s) listed below. I affirm that:

1. I have regular access to my e-mail account and to the internet and will check regularly for Notices of Electronic Filing;
2. I have established a PACER account;
3. I understand that electronic service is service under Rule 5 of the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure and Rule 5.2 of the Local Civil Rules, and that I will no longer receive paper copies of case filings, including motions, decisions, orders, and other documents;
4. I will promptly notify the Court if there is any change in my personal data, such as name, address, or e-mail address, or if I wish to cancel this consent to electronic service;
5. I understand that I must regularly review the docket sheet of my case so that I do not miss a filing; and
6. I understand that this consent applies only to the cases listed below and that if I file additional cases in which I would like to receive electronic service of notices of documents, I must file consent forms for those cases.

Civil case(s) filed in the Southern District of New York:

Note: This consent will apply to all cases that you have filed in this court, so please list all of your pending and terminated cases. For each case, include the case name and docket number (for example, John Doe v. New City, 10-CV-01234).

Name (Last, First, MI)

Address	City	State	Zip Code
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Telephone Number	E-mail Address
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Date	Signature
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Return completed form to:

Pro Se Office (Room 200)
500 Pearl Street
New York, NY 10007